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AN

HASTY SKETCH

OF

MR. PITT'S

CELEBRATED ADMINISTRATION:

MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

TO THE

Right Honourable

LORD AUCKLAND,

ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S MOST HONOURABLE PRIVY COUNCIL, &c. &c. &c.

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HASTY SKETCH

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My Lord!

THE Miniſters who, happily for this country, and indeed for Europe, took the reins of government at the cloſe of the year 1783, and who ſtill hold them with conſiderable credit to themſelves, and with the greateſt advantage and ſecurity to the nation, are the ſubject of theſe haſty but diſpaſſionate conſiderations: I ſay haſty, becauſe I write conciſely, and only ſkim upon the ſurface of events of the greateſt magnitude to this country in particular, and to Europe in general; which has had, and ſtill has, a very conſiderable in-

tereſt in the meaſures of this celebrated Miniſter's adminiſtration.

My Lord, the protracted and unpopular adminiſtration of Lord North, with which your Lordſhip was well and long acquainted, and particularly the diſaſtrous American war, entered into raſhly, and conducted with a ſupineneſs peculiar to that good man, and able, but indolent and *undecided* Miniſter, had convulſed the commercial and landed intereſts of this country to a very great degree; and that general diſſatisfaction and inſecurity for want of confidence in Adminiſtration, which is the energy and very ſoul of government, had given ſuch a ſhock to public credit, by a vaſt additional load of debt and taxes to pay the intereſt, that it required almoſt a miracle to appeaſe the diſſatisfied public, and to reſtore the tranquillity and ſecurity of the nation: a nation, which had been long abuſed by a wretched ſyſtem of meaſures, weakly concerted and as puſillanimouſly executed; and whoſe very exiſtence was attacked at nearly the cloſe of this unfortunate adminiſtration, by a domeſtic diſorder,

diſorder, which, had it laſted a little longer, would have deſtroyed the Bank and private property, and with them the national credit and proſperity beyond redemption.

My Lord, it was a temporary frenzy; and the ſudden, rapid, and alarming havoc of that period was a devaſtation of the lower orders of the people, which threatened a revolution as ſudden, as ſanguinary, and calamitous, from the dreadful effects of anarchy (the greateſt peſt of ſociety), as that which has ſince, from as ſlight a cauſe, happened in France. I mean the riots of 1780, which were a ſudden and violent concuſſion that was equally a reproach to the inefficacy of the civil power and to the puſillanimity of the executive government, whoſe ſupineneſs was both a public diſgrace and a national calamity. The neglect of the city magiſtracy was condemned, and the chief magiſtrate fined; which was, in my apprehenſion, an *unjuſt act*, becauſe the police of Middleſex was moſt to blame for neglect, and the Miniſtry more culpable for inattention. Had the government rouſed the attention of the magiſtrates of Weſtminſter and Middleſex, the

the alarming evil would not have travelled eaſtward. The late Mr. Wilkes was very active to promote a proſecution againſt the then Lord Mayor, for neglect in the eaſt, whilſt he, as a magiſtrate of Middleſex and a reſident in Weſtminſter, was infinitely more to blame for his neglect in the weſt of London, where it broke out, and was ſuffered to ſpread, in a manner that was as diſgraceful to Adminiſtration as it was alarming to the nation.

My Lord, to heal the deep wounds, both domeſtic and foreign, given to the nation by this very unpopular Adminiſtration, the noble Lord was removed *by the loud voice of the public*, though a very valuable member of ſociety, becauſe private virtues are not to be put in competition with the public welfare; and his Lordſhip was ſucceeded by the popular Marquis of Rockingham, whoſe imbecility, under the untoward circumſtances of this country, was to the full as great a national calamity: for it will be admitted, by even the admirers of that Miniſter, that imbecility is not a fit cha-

racter to govern a vaſt commercial and maritime nation, at a period that required the moſt comprehenſive meaſures and the boldeſt exertions, to recover our great loſſes, and to reſtore PUBLIC CREDIT (affected by a vaſt addition to our NATIONAL DEBT) and the energy of our government.

My Lord, it was a period of ſtrong ſenſation and great anxiety, that required comprehenſion, judgment, and animation, far, very far indeed, beyond the abilities of the noble and much-reſpected Marquis. The death of this very honeſt but unqualified Miniſter ſoon happening, he was ſucceeded by a ſtateſman of a different deſcription, namely, the celebrated and *buſy* Earl of Shelburne of the kingdom of Ireland, ſo well known for having been an advocate for the Scottiſh ſyſtem of the late Earl of Bute, under honeſt George Grenville, who was no more than the oſtenſible Miniſter of the Scottiſh party, or ſecret influence of the Crown, at that period. The great zeal with which that upright Miniſter (for uprightneſs will ever diſtinguiſh the Grenvilles) defended the

the American Stamp Act, gave riſe to an opinion that it was his own meaſure (like the favourite exciſe ſcheme of Sir Robert Walpole); but it appeared ſome years after his death, that it was a brat of the Scotch party. Mr. Charles Jenkinſon, the favourite's confidant, and the chief agent of his inviſible influence, who was in the ſecret, declared in the Houſe of Commons, that the meaſure of the Stamp Act was not Mr. Grenville's. The diſtinction was not worth aſcertaining, whether Lord Bute held the reins of government in his own hands or in thoſe of his delegates; but it is well known that he governed the cloſet as abſolutely and entirely as when he openly filled the firſt offices of ſtate: and when he abdicated the government, he gave *the key of his ſecret influence, and the ſyſtem of his theory, to the perſons to whom he had given his confidence.* Miniſters who, unlike Lord Chatham, can ſubmit to act under the ſecret influence of an inviſible power, have been ſeduced into paths, without ſeeing the hand that led them into errors. This was the fettered adminiſtration of honeſt George Grenville,

and

and this was the ſchool of the jeſuitical Lord Shelburne, whom we now ſee placed upon the higheſt ſeat of authority.

My Lord, this Iriſh Prime Miniſter of Great Britain (with abilities certainly of the firſt rate, but with principles not congenial to the Britiſh character) gloried in giving independence to the North Americans, whereby he ſeparated thirteen colonies from the crown of Great Britain for ever. The glory of ſuch a *ſeparation* is more congenial to the Iriſh than the Engliſh character, which would more naturally glory in a valuable *acquiſition*. Without entering into a conſideration of the *principles* of a war for the defence and preſervation of thoſe colonies, or of the *policy* by which they were emancipated, I will venture to ſay, that if the expenſe and fatality of the one, under Lord North, were great, the ſurrender of the other, under Lord Shelburne, was ſtill a greater ſacrifice; becauſe thoſe colonies were invaluable both in a commercial and political light to Great Britain.

The inconſiſtency of this Prime Miniſter of the Iriſh nobility was remarkable, and diſcovers a duplicity better calculated to promote his own ambition than the true intereſt of the ſtate. The noble Earl firſt maintained, with great vehemence and affected patriotiſm, to conceal his principles, that, "by the ſurrender of the Britiſh colonies in North America, the ſun of Great Britain would ſet, never to riſe again;" and yet ſoon after, when he was placed at the head of the cabinet, he gloried in the early act of effectually and totally emancipating thoſe invaluable colonies!!! For this jeſuitical inconſiſtency the Iriſh Earl was made an Engliſh Marquis, and with the gratification of his own ambition, this well-informed, but pompous Miniſter reſigned, and left the helm to a *junto* or ſtrange coalition, conſiſting of the Duke of Portland, Lord North, Mr. Fox, and Mr. Burke, to the aſtoniſhment of the public; becauſe theſe characters were well known to be as different as the poles are oppoſite: and it was not eaſy to conceive how natures not congenial, how talents, diſpoſitions, and views, in direct oppoſition,

oppoſition, could cordially and effectually cohere for the public welfare.

By this ill-judged and unexpected COALITION, which greatly ſurpriſed all ranks of the people, and was conſidered as a groſs inſult and a high reflection on the credulity of the nation, the two greateſt political enemies became on a ſudden the moſt affectionate friends and brother Secretaries of State; and Mr. Burke, more celebrated as an orator than a ſtateſman, became a *ruſh-light* economiſt in the lucrative office of Paymaſter-general, for which he ſeemed to be little qualified: for in this *arduous* employment, whilſt he convulſed all the departments of the ſtate, from a puerile principle of economy, he, very inconſiſtently with his own principles of public virtue and ſcrupulous integrity, openly defended a great public defaulter in his own department, the late Mr. John Powell of the Pay-office; who, nevertheleſs, became *felo de ſe* from a deep ſenſe of his criminality, which the virtuous and eloquent Mr. Burke took ſo much pains to exculpate!!!

My Lord, this heterogeneous coalition of the *bittereſt* enemies, who, to ſhare the public offices and to amuſe the public, had, in appearance, become the *ſweeteſt* friends, with principles the moſt deluſive in ſome, who overthrew long-eſtabliſhed ſyſtems, from pretended motives of honeſty and fidelity to the nation, while they had the face to ſkreen great defaulters of their own fraternity; and with principles the moſt arbitrary in others, who, placed on the high ſeat of deſpotiſm, endeavoured to ſweep away the rights and property of the Eaſt India Company, and to ſhake private ſecurity and public credit to their very foundation—this heterogeneous *triumvirate* of North, Fox, and Burke (for it is my opinion that, notwithſtanding the excellent private character of the Duke of Portland, the beſt compliment that can be paid to his Grace, as a Miniſter of *that period*, is to ſay nothing of him), tended to dilate rather than heal the wounds occaſioned by Lord North's adminiſtration; and Mr. Fox, as one of his Majeſty's principal ſecretaries of ſtate, having brought into Parliament a moſt

moſt extraordinary bill, in 1783, relative to the Eaſt India Company, it occaſioned ſuch a general and ſtrong ſenſation, and ſuch well-grounded alarm, both to the Company and the commercial intereſt, that it abſolutely convulſed the nation, and rouſed ſuch a ſpirited oppoſition to it in Parliament as to throw out the bill and the Adminiſtration that ſupported it, which diſcovered principles ſo inimical to the commercial intereſt, to private property, and to the public credit of a free trading ſtate.

My Lord, by this fortunate overthrow of a moſt unnatural and unpopular coalition of heterogeneous characters, an entire new ſet of Miniſters took the reins of government, with Mr. William Pitt, of the houſe of Chatham, at their head. The nation, though ſtunned by the misfortunes and loſſes of a long and unfortunate Adminiſtration, amuſed for a ſhort time by another, duped by the pompoſity of a third, and groſſly inſulted by a *junto*, called a coalition, were not at all ſurpriſed at the courage of a very

young ſtateſman, who boldly ventured to take the helm in a ſtorm, remembering the words of his friend Horace, "It was courage that raiſed Hercules to the gods, and Auguſtus to the head of the Roman republic."

Charmed with the novelty, and prepoſſeſſed in favour of the ſecond ſon of Lord Chatham, from the brilliant character of his illuſtrious anceſtor, the hearts of the public went with Mr. Pitt, and they loſt the idea of his *youth* in the remembrance of the ſplendid abilities and public virtue of one of the greateſt Miniſters of the age; which they truly ſuppoſed would inſpire all his ſentiments and animate all his actions for the dignity and proſperity of his country. In this I ſhall have occaſion to ſhow the public were not at all miſtaken; for, with the unparalleled friendſhip and patriotiſm of the Right Honourable HENRY DUNDAS, one of the ableſt, moſt conſiſtent, and indefatigable Miniſters this nation has produced, Mr. PITT has ſhown himſelf a great financier, by promoting the commerce,

commerce, revenue, and public credit of the nation, beyond any former period; and like his noble and immortal anceſtor, a very able cabinet Miniſter in the proſecution of an extraordinary war, and the happy excluſion of a political PESTILENCE, that has infected and nearly overthrown other parts of Europe; while the Engliſh enjoy, in the mild reign of as amiable a Prince as ever filled a throne, the vaſt bleſſings of proſperity and ſecurity unexampled in the proſecution of an obſtinate but neceſſary war: a war greatly lamented from the loſs of ſo much blood and treaſure, but rendered abſolutely unavoidable for our national ſecurity from the greateſt of all calamities; and for the preſervation of all the bleſſings we wiſh to enjoy and hand down to poſterity as an irrefragable proof of our patriotiſm, commonly called the love of our country, which, as it is our beſt intereſt, ſo it is the nobleſt ambition of enlightened and poliſhed nations.

My Lord, the eyes of the nation were now fixed on this *young* Miniſter and his incom-

incomparable friend and colleague Mr. DUNDAS, whoſe comprehenſive and vigorous mind, like the inundation of the *Nile*, that fertilizes the land, enabled Mr. PITT, the following year, to bring into Parliament his famous Eaſt India Bill, which totally defeated the alarming deſigns of Mr. Fox's party, and firmly eſtabliſhed the new Adminiſtration. That excellent Bill (the very reverſe in principle and effect to that of Mr. Fox) was found to be ſo admirably calculated to preſerve private property and reſtore public credit, to ſecure the rights of the Company, and to promote the intereſt of the nation, that it was vigorouſly ſupported by the Eaſt India Company (the beſt judges of its operation), and by every perſon who had at heart the great commercial intereſt, the proſperity and PUBLIC CREDIT of this vaſt trading nation.

My Lord, the new Miniſters having given ſuch ſtrong proofs of ability and public ſpirit, to heal the deep wounds given to the nation by former Adminiſtrations, and being ſo well ſupported by the great body of the

the trading intereſt, the proſpect of the public brightened apace, and great confidence was placed, both by the Parliament and the people, in Mr. Pitt and his colleagues. The Legiſlature and the public found their confidence well placed; for the operations of his famous India Bill of 1784 were ſo rapid, ſo extenſive and happy, and ſo very different from the arbitrary principles of Mr. Fox's Bill of 1783 (which went to the ſequeſtration of the rights and property of the Company, and the annihilation of that vaſt trade and revenue), that the very exiſtence of the Eaſt India Company, of private property, and of PUBLIC CREDIT, ſeemed to depend upon the ſupport of Mr. PITT's patriotic and ſpirited adminiſtration.

LETTER II.

MY LORD!

AT the very time the Eaſt India Bill brought into Parliament by Mr. Pitt was rapidly producing the moſt happy and extenſive effects, it was ſarcaſtically ſaid, by the unſucceſsful Coalition, that "the firſt Miniſter of a great nation was "a very young man." The obſervation was perfectly right, but the concluſion drawn from it was wrong; for although he was the youngeſt prime miniſter of Europe, he ſoon diſcovered the brilliant talents and animation of his noble and much-beloved anceſtor; and is now univerſally allowed to be one of the greateſt orators and ableſt miniſters this country, and perhaps Europe, has produced.

The operation of this memorable India Bill, which embraced ſo many great objects,

jects, the wiſdom of the Board of Control founded upon it, and the judicious arrangement for the renewal of the Company's charter, with other acts of the ſoundeſt policy and the greateſt utility, reſtored the commerce and credit of the nation, and gave ſecurity and confidence to the public, which are domeſtic events of the greateſt conſequence in a great trading country. The nation being recovered from the loſſes and the effects with which they were ſtunned for a long time, the people were now happy to ſee a *ſettled* adminiſtration, that had done wonders for the ſecurity and proſperity of commerce; and ſo perfectly ſatisfied were the public with the happy change and the vaſt proſpects that opened to the nation of proſperity and ſecurity, that the OPPOSITION (though always natural, and, in ſome meaſure, neceſſary, in a free ſtate) was the moſt feeble to an adminiſtration that had proved itſelf ſo able and ſo worthy of the public confidence by meaſures of the ſoundeſt policy and the greateſt utility.

My Lord, by theſe means the nation recovered rapidly from the blows received in the American war under Lord North, from the imbecility of a Rockingham, the jeſuitiſm of a Lanſdown, and the heterogeneous coalition of Portland, North, Fox, and Burke. By theſe glorious means, the blunders of former adminiſtrations and their unhappy effects were forgotten, and men of all deſcriptions were happy in the return of commerce, public credit, and proſperity, to a degree that created great confidence in his Majeſty's government, and gave to Mr. Pitt's miniſtry a ſtability that no oppoſition of the diſcontented party could ſhake; as appears by vaſt majorities in Parliament, which are the criterion of legiſlative approbation and public confidence in the principles and meaſures of his Majeſty's miniſters.

My Lord, at this happy *epocha*, in which Adminiſtration were firmly fixed by the virtue of their domeſtic meaſures and the wiſdom of their foreign conduct—a period of vaſt commercial proſperity and public

public credit, of great energy and high rank among the powers of Europe—fickle Fortune, as if envious of the great bleſſings we enjoyed in the mildeſt reign and under the ableſt miniſtry, once more attempted to thwart our national happineſs, and endanger our ſecurity, by a wonderful revolution in France, the moſt extraordinary event that ever could happen to diſſolve that monarchical government, and, by a violent concuſſion, to unhinge all the governments of Europe.

My Lord, an adminiſtration that had given ſuch great proofs of activity and public virtue, by the wiſeſt and happieſt domeſtic meaſures, now juſtly claimed, and as warmly received, the confidence of the nation, for their conduct in regard to foreign meaſures, of the greateſt conſequence, not to this country alone but to all Europe. As they had boldly and happily reſtored our commerce, revenue, and public credit, by an unexampled degree of proſperity (the beſt proofs of ability and public virtue, and the beſt pledges of fidelity

lity in the greateſt public truſts), it was fair to require, and juſt to grant, the moſt unbounded confidence in the decided character and animated foreign exertions of his Majeſty's Miniſters.

My Lord, in conſequence of this national confidence, ſo flattering to Mr. Pitt's adminiſtration, the Britiſh Cabinet viewed the revolution in France and the convulſion of Europe with a mixture of concern and circumſpection, which evinced their ability and patriotiſm to ſtem the tide of adverſity and the torrent of infatuation, which, operating with the velocity and devaſtation of the peſtilence, threatened the foundation of every government and the independence of every ſtate.

At the commencement of this wonderful revolution, which has operated more deſtructively in France than the contagion in Turkey, his Majeſty's Miniſters, like cautious mariners in a violent ſtorm, pauſed on the dreadful event and on the probable effects, as they concerned this country and the

the reſt of Europe. Shocked at the vaſt calamity in a great neighbouring nation, and dreading the alarming conſequences ariſing from this violent political peſtilence ſo near them, they determined to take ſuch a decided and vigorous part as humanity and juſtice ſeemed to require, and as ſound policy rendered abſolutely neceſſary to the balance of power for the ſecurity of Great Britain and her dependencies.

My Lord, to that *decided character* it is manifeſt this country owes its preſervation from the greateſt calamity, its vaſt proſperity, and its preſent high rank and commanding ſituation; and it is probable the powers of Europe will owe to the ſame cauſe the greateſt ſhare of their happineſs, by their preſervation from the ſubjection of the French, who threatened the total overthrow of all their governments, with the ſacrifice of their liberty and property; for it is well known, my Lord, that the French nation, not being ſatisfied with overthrowing their own monarchical

govern-

government, under a pretence of national liberty, wiſhed, by this wonderful revolution, to involve all Europe in the ſame convulſion and dreadful calamity, by means of new-fangled principles of *equality*, which are calculated to unhinge all governments by an emancipation from that wiſe ſubordination which is the ſoul of civilization and the ſecurity of every ſtate.

My Lord, they not only *wiſhed* for this general and diſaſtrous event, but they endeavoured to give it effect by a bold declaration of war againſt all monarchical governments, and indeed by an enmity to all other governments, under a pretence of univerſal liberty upon their levelling and plundering ſyſtem of EQUALITY, that deſtroyed all diſtinctions in ſociety and all ſecurity of private and public property, for which governments were eſtabliſhed and ſociety organized. If the diſtinctions of ſociety are as neceſſary, as the links of a chain, to the beauty, the ſtrength, and intereſt of the whole community, the levelling ſyſtem of the French deſtroys the no-

bleſt incitements and the happieſt effects of national ambition and true glory: and if, by the law of the ſtrongeſt, which is the law of tyrants, they deſtroy the liberty and property of the weaker ſtates, they deſtroy the great ends for which men enter into ſociety, namely, to ſecure their religion and laws, their liberty and property.

My Lord, it has been ſaid, with great truth, that "Equality is the ſoul of li-"berty." It is a doctrine to which every Engliſhman will moſt heartily ſubſcribe. Liberty denotes equality, or that impartial government which is peculiar to a free nation, and diſtinguiſhes it from the inequality, partiality, and ſlavery of military and abſolute governments. But there is as much difference between Engliſh and French equality as there is between the ſubſtance and the ſhadow. The Engliſh nation underſtand by the word equality, a general and equal right to the bleſſings of the conſtitution and laws of a free country, and not an equal right to the diſtinctions of ſociety, which are abſolutely ne-

ceſſary to the dignity, the proſperity, and ſecurity of every well-organized ſtate.—An equal right to the principles and bleſſings of an excellent conſtitution, and to the virtue and wiſdom of the beſt laws, is the ſubſtance of equality; the reſt is the ſhadow of liberty, a political *ignis fatuus*.

This unjuſt and raſh declaration of war on the part of the French, denounced againſt all monarchical governments in particular, and their views of extirpation which they did not conceal, did not eſcape the early attention of his Majeſty's very able and active Miniſters for the preſervation of the balance of power, as the greateſt ſecurity to the intereſts of this country and all Europe.

My Lord, that early declaration of the French was an *aggreſſion* of ſo alarming a nature as to require the greateſt caution, and juſtify the boldeſt exertions on the part of the Britiſh nation: it was in fact, though not in form, a declaration of war from the new government of France againſt every

every monarchical and indeed againſt every eſtabliſhed government in Europe.

My Lord, in this intereſting and arduous ſituation of the powers of Europe, and particularly Great Britain, with which your Lordſhip, as a diſtinguiſhed diplomatic character, was perfectly acquainted, it was no longer neceſſary to inquire what ſteps were proper to be taken by the executive government of this country, ſince the violent and alarming attack of the French on the rights and ſecurity of all other nations, clearly pointed out to his Majeſty's patriotic Miniſters the great principle of conduct in ſo alarming a caſe, and the meaſures to be purſued. The earlieſt and moſt effectual means of defence againſt the greateſt diſorder in a great neighbouring kingdom, became inevitably neceſſary, from an unprovoked attack of the moſt ſerious nature and the moſt dreadful tendency. In plain Engliſh, the wonderful revolution in France, the alarming principles of its revolutionary government, and the hoſtile declarations and views againſt

all other governments, rendered a war between England and France abſolutely unavoidable.

My Lord, I know his Majeſty's Miniſters have been very much blamed for *precipitancy*, raſhneſs, and folly, and alſo for a want of foreſight, and for the aſtoniſhing ſucceſs of the French armies. But *who* blames them? None, I believe, but thoſe who wiſh to fill their places, and their hungry partiſans, who wiſh to be provided for. Mr. Pitt's adminiſtration can anſwer to God and their country for the virtue of the principle and the prudence of the meaſure, by which they were impelled to make an early declaration of war, founded on the *aggreſſion* of a powerful nation, that had violently overthrown its own government, and endeavoured, by a declaration of enmity and the diſſemination of ruinous principles, ſubverſive of all eſtabliſhed ſyſtems, to overthrow all the other governments of Europe.

I am

I am ready to admit, and I am perſuaded it is your Lordſhip's ſentiment, that precipitancy denotes raſhneſs and folly. But this early meaſure of the Britiſh Miniſtry to repel an attack unprovoked, and a danger that threatened this nation with the ſame dreadful calamity of murder, rapine, plunder, and devaſtation, which unhappily pervaded that vaſt country, and ſwept away the lives and property of the ſubject, whilſt it deſtroyed every ſource of revenue and public credit, was the effect of a *decided* character in the Britiſh cabinet, which, to the great honour of this nation, ſcorns the maſk of deluſion. The war was, therefore, ſtrictly juſt, and abſolutely neceſſary to the particular intereſt of Great Britain, and to the general ſecurity of Europe, which can only be found in a judicious balance of power. That balance, well underſtood, was always conſidered as the greateſt object of this country, becauſe it is evidently the greateſt ſecurity of the powers of Europe againſt the ambition of France, which always had, and ever muſt have,

have, as a great rival nation, views hoſtile to the proſperity and ſecurity of this vaſt manufacting and commercial iſland.

My Lord, England and France muſt ever be, from the ſituation and views of the two countries, great rivals and natural enemies. France, a very extenſive, populous, and induſtrious trading nation, has ever been, and will ever be, envious and jealous of Great Britain, as the greateſt check to her navigation, commerce, wealth, and ambition. This jealouſy and enmity are at preſent ſo great and manifeſt, that France will endeavour to make peace with all the world, that ſhe may be able to direct all her force and influence againſt the commerce and ſecurity of this country; and this reſtleſs, ambitious, and powerful nation, can never be at reſt until her views againſt Great Britain are gratified.

My Lord, it is hardly neceſſary to obſerve to a diſtinguiſhed diplomatic character, that this is the policy of France,

which ſhe does not attempt nor wiſh to conceal; but it may be neceſſary to add a truth, which, though ſelf-evident, may not be generally admitted, namely, although it may be called reſtleſs ambition in the French, it is a natural jealouſy and a neceſſary attempt, in a very extenſive, populous, and warlike nation, to *balance* the vaſt commerce, wealth, and naval power of this iſland, which are the wonder and envy of the other nations of Europe, and prove, more than volumes of panegyric, the excellence of our government under one of the beſt of ſovereigns, and the wiſdom and patriotiſm of Mr. Pitt's active and decided adminiſtration.

LETTER III.

MY LORD!

HAVING concisely, for that is the nature of an *Hasty Sketch*, justified the *principle* of the present war with France, the measures taken in consequence thereof became necessary, and indeed unavoidable, according to the existing circumstances, with all the caution and foresight which fall to the lot of imperfect human nature, which, in its most exalted state, is not infallible. His Majesty's Ministers lay claim to the very best intentions, to the most active and vigorous exertions for the good of the great cause in which they have necessarily embarked, but not to infallibility, which belongs to God alone. And as nothing is so uncertain as the events of war, of which we have had so many extraordinary instances, so it was impossible for the British Ministry, with the

the greateſt attention to the cauſe and the probable conſequences, to have foreſeen the effects the war has produced, or the vaſt ſucceſs of the French armies; which they owe, in a great meaſure, to a ſyſtem of violence and terror in their own country, and of rapine and devaſtation in the countries they have overpowered by their vaſt numbers, aided *by the inſidious ſeceſſion of Pruſſia and Spain*, of which this nation, faithful to all its engagements, under every viciſſitude, could have no idea.

Having, with great ſubmiſſion to your Lordſhip's ſuperior information and judgment, and with great reſpect for the opinion of the public, conciſely, but I humbly hope, totally, exculpated the Britiſh Miniſtry from every charge ariſing from precipitancy at the commencement, and of raſhneſs and folly in the proſecution of the war, I return to the pleaſing taſk of commendation for the decided part they have taken throughout; for the principle upon which the war is founded, and the ſpirit with which it is proſecuted; for the great

and neceſſary purpoſe of procuring ſuch an honourable peace as ſhall preſerve the commercial proſperity and rank of this nation, and reſtore the rights and intereſts of Europe, which have been violated and plundered in a manner unprecedented in the hiſtory of Europe; in a manner that muſt cover the face of every Frenchman with confuſion, who is not loſt to all ſenſe of ſhame, and has not totally abandoned every principle of juſtice and every tender feeling of humanity.

My Lord, it is manifeſt, from the little I have ſaid, and your Lordſhip has ſtronger evidence from the vaſt deal you know, that the merit of Mr. Pitt's adminiſtration is great beyond expreſſion, and juſtly entitled to the very large majorities obtained in Parliament, which are expreſſive of the great confidence of the Legiſlature and the true ſenſe of the nation. The fate not only of this country but of all Europe ſeems to depend on the decided conduct, and the bold but judicious perſeverance of his Majeſty's Miniſters. The taſk is indeed

deed arduous, but their cauſe is good; and they deſerve celebrity for ſaving this nation from all the horrors of murder and rapine, which have deſtroyed all religion, all diſtinctions in ſociety, and all ſecurity of private and public property in France; while the Engliſh, by the virtue and wiſdom of their government, enjoy every bleſſing of religious and civil liberty.

My Lord, if our emancipation from the greateſt misfortunes of ſociety; if the enjoyment of the chief of all bleſſings (the reverſe of the unhappy condition of France), be great and invaluable acquiſitions to this country, to whom are we indebted for them? If we owe this happineſs and the ſecurity of ſuch ineſtimable bleſſings, firſt to the Supreme Being, and next to Mr. Pitt's adminiſtration, how vaſt is our obligation, and how ardent ſhould be our deſire to do juſtice to their diſtinguiſhed merit, which has ſaved this country from the greateſt horrors, and which, with the bleſſings of Heaven, it is humbly hoped will eventually ſave Europe from the moſt

afflictive of all calamities, notwithſtanding the great military force of the French, the aſtoniſhing ſucceſs of their armies through the ſeceſſion of our allies, and the plundering ſyſtem by which they have prolonged a war that, *in the midſt of victories, is ruinous to them*, by the annihilation of their manufactures and trade, the deſtruction of their commercial reſources, and the loſs of public credit, which are of greater conſequence than all the temporary acquiſitions of unprecedented robbery.

My Lord, if France is victorious upon the continent, it is by a ſyſtem of violence and plunder that tramples upon the law of nations; a ſyſtem that poſſeſſes no principle but what is conducive to her ambition and venality. This temporary ſcourge to Europe is at preſent a great curſe, and a great cauſe of alarm, but, with the bleſſings of Providence upon his Majeſty's councils and arms, we may reaſonably hope to ſee this quarter of the world emancipated from the terror and devaſtation of

theſe *freebooters*, who carry murder, fire, and devaſtation, wherever they go. But while theſe *invaders* overrun Italy, and plunder the weaker ſtates, to ſupport their armies of *banditti*, their own country is diſorganizing, and France is ruined at home, by the loſs of all thoſe reſources of a populous nation which ariſe from manufactures, navigation, and commerce.

The French, in the true character of their nation, boaſt of wealth which they have plundered, without taking into conſideration the great loſſes which the war occaſions at home; while Great Britain, empreſs of the ocean, confines their maritime ſtrength, annihilates their trade and commercial reſources, and protects her own extenſive trade, the proſperity of which furniſhes *the ſinews of war*, and will ſoon or late force the French Government to reſtore peace and ſecurity to Europe, though deprived of the aſſiſtance and co-operation of her allies. Thoſe allies it was ſound policy to *ſubſidize* at almoſt any price, which would be ſmall, when

compared with the happy effects of reſiſting effectually the plundering ſyſtem of the French Government, that has ſo daringly violated the rights and ſeized on the property of one part of Europe, and threatens the reſt with the ſame devaſtation.

To conclude: in this intereſting ſituation of Europe, alarmed on all ſides by the vaſt military forces of France, the character of the Britiſh Miniſtry (the longeſt of the preſent reign) ſtands very high for the beſt principles and the boldeſt exertions for the general ſecurity; for meaſures that produce all the happy effects at *home* which a free nation can wiſh; and that are calculated to produce the happieſt conſequences *abroad*, by reſtoring the balance of power in Europe, which has been overthrown by an irruption of the French, and by a ſyſtem of murder, rapine, and devaſtation, that tramples upon the rights of nations, and endangers the property and ſecurity of every ſtate. It is ſuch a terrible concuſſion of Europe as threatens

threatens the annihilation of every religious and civil eſtabliſhment, and the ſubverſion of every government. Againſt this deſpotiſm and tyranny Great Britain oppoſes herſelf for her own preſervation and the general good, with all the force of her great reſources, and with the Herculean ſtrength of her vaſt maritime power.

My Lord, ſacred truth and juſtice divine require me to cloſe this Haſty Sketch of Mr. Pitt's celebrated Adminiſtration (which is popular, under the moſt trying circumſtances of the nation from the preſſure of a moſt extraordinary war) with a ſlight panegyric on three members of the cabinet, in particular, namely, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Dundas, and Lord Grenville. I have the greateſt reſpect for his Majeſty's Miniſters in general, and am convinced in my own mind that they have all a conſiderable ſhare of merit, and are entitled to the admiration and gratitude of their country, for the beſt principles, the moſt uſeful talents, and an animated and faithful diſcharge of the greateſt public truſt. The

brilliancy

brilliancy of our naval actions ſhows more forcibly than the eloquence of Tully or Demoſthenes, the diſtinguiſhed merit of Earl Spencer at the head of the Admiralty, and proves, as clear as any mathematical demonſtration, the ſound policy of having a landſman at the head of that Board, to promote UNANIMITY, to which I aſcribe the co-operation and glorious actions of the Navy this war. But although I could dwell long and with great admiration, on the patriotiſm of the ſeveral members of the cabinet, were it conſiſtent with the brevity of an Haſty Sketch of Adminiſtration, I deſire leave to pay an humble tribute to three in particular,

Notwithſtanding a ſtrong objection was made to the *youth* of Mr. Pitt, ſuch have been his great application, the vigour of his mind, and the energy of his exertions, that he has exceeded the long adminiſtration of Lord North; and every day he ſeems, from the utility of his meaſures, to be more firmly fixed in the high opi-

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nion of his Majeſty and the public; as we ſee by the proſperity of our commerce and *the proud ſtate of our public credit* in time of war, under his adminiſtration, from the true ſenſe and great confidence of the nation.

But notwithſtanding the hereditary talents and public virtue of this young ſtateſman, he will, with native modeſty, and a greatneſs of ſoul worthy of the houſe of Chatham, acknowledge that he owes much to the great talents and unexampled friendſhip of Mr. Secretary DUNDAS, whoſe vaſt abilities and ſteady principles would do honour to any ſtate and to any age.

Great alſo is the merit of Lord Grenville: the noble Secretary of State poſſeſſes ſplendid talents and brilliant accompliſhments. The beſt judges confeſs, that the noble Lord is one of the ableſt and moſt accompliſhed ſecretaries of ſtate for foreign affairs that this country can boaſt of. Indeed the illuſtrious houſe of Grenville has diſtinguiſhed itſelf by the moſt

brilliant and patriotic actions, and, with an activity that cannot be too much admired, have rendered the nobleſt ſervices to their country.

My Lord, how vaſtly ſuperior are the talents and principles of theſe three Miniſters, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Dundas, and Lord Grenville, to the ſtrange coalition of Lord North, Mr. Fox, and Mr. Burke! It has, indeed, been ſaid, with exultation, by the gentlemen in oppoſition, that the Miniſters who declared the war are unfit to cloſe the war; but this maxim is not founded on reaſon and ſound policy, ſince the reverſe is manifeſtly the truth. Thoſe ſtateſmen who beſt know the principle upon which the war was declared, and upon which it has been proſecuted; thoſe who beſt know the ſituation of this country, and the relative ſituations of other nations, are certainly the beſt judges how to terminate the quarrel, and to promote ſuch a peace as is ſuited to the exiſting circumſtances. Is not the longeſt Adminiſtration of the preſent reign, with more than

than ſixteen years experience, better qualified to make an honourable peace than a new ſet of Miniſters in their *noviciate*, at a time that requires the wiſdom of experience and a thorough knowledge of what has paſſed and is likely to be produced, from which to form their judgment?

But, my Lord, were we to ſuppoſe ſo ſtrange a ſoleciſm as that the great talents and the great experience of his Majeſty's preſent Miniſters *diſqualified* them, let me aſk *who* are more fit to terminate the war by an honourable peace? No man in his ſenſes will, for a moment, think of either Mr. Fox or the Marquis of Lanſdown. Mr. Fox is certainly a great political orator, and Lord Lanſdown is a well-informed ſtateſman; but they are no better qualified to be at the head of the Cabinet in time of war than to take the command of the grand fleet. Admitting, then, that the preſent Adminiſtration were to reſign, upon that ſtrange maxim, that "thoſe who have conducted the war (and muſt

neceſſarily be beſt acquainted with the ſituation and views of the belligerent powers) are the worſt qualified to make peace," what men of talents, of virtue, and experience, have we to ſucceed a Pitt, a Dundas, and a Grenville?

Confident, my Lord, that the nation cannot be in better hands, and that our domeſtic and foreign concerns cannot have a better ſecurity than Mr. Pitt's adminiſtration, a change of Miniſters appears to me to be totally unneceſſary and highly impolitic; ſince it would be removing Miniſters with whoſe talents and principles we are well acquainted, to make room for men who have not their experience, and whoſe public virtue is problematical.—My Lord, it would be leaving a certainty for an uncertainty, and quitting the ſubſtance to purſue the ſhadow, and incompatible with the wiſdom and intereſt of an enlightened nation.

Equally unneceſſary and impolitic are the reforms ſo long contended for.—

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My Lord, I am highly gratified, as an Engliſhman, in the truth and importance of an obſervation of my own, that although this country is the parent of liberty, ſhe is not the cheriſher of reſtleſs ſpeculative innovation. The minds of men are fixed, from a clear conviction of the wiſdom and utility of their government. The conſtitution is, therefore, too well underſtood, and firmly eſtabliſhed, to be ſhaken by any revolution in other ſtates, or by any principles of ſpeculative politicians. The clouds that thickened apace, and threatened a ſtorm from a great neighbouring nation, have paſſed over this country, without affecting its government, much to the honour of the nation, who have evinced a well-placed confidence in the executive power, and to the credit of his Majeſty's Miniſters, who have ſo well deſerved it, by their able and ſteady conduct. The alarm was certainly great, becauſe the danger in a political hurricane was near and imminent; but the extraordinary care and animation of a decided Adminiſtration have preſerved the conſtitution and

every thing dear to ſociety. Innovation, which is the hobby-horſe of Oppoſition, and indeed the only plauſible principle by which the reſtleſs members of the community can amuſe the credulous part of the nation, is therefore unneceſſary. Such a ſpeculation as is underſtood by reform, brings to my mind the folly and misfortune of the *Spaniard*, who, when at Rome, enjoying a good conſtitution, was prevailed upon to be blooded for the good of his health, which was the cauſe of his death; and left the following caution, as a legacy to the credulous and reſtleſs who are diſſatiſfied with the bleſſing of Heaven:

"*Eu eſtavo bueno, mas por eſtar melhor eſto aqui.*"—"I was very well; but, not ſatisfied with the bleſſing of an excellent conſtitution, I am in my grave."

This is an admirable leſſon, and I wiſh it may not be thrown away upon thoſe reformers who tamper with our ineſtimable conſtitution, and wiſh to cure diſorders that exiſt only in diſtempered imaginations.

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The doctrine of Mr. Fox is abhorrent, and ſhows great want of judgment and great inability for government—" Reform, not only in the conſtitution of Parliament, but in the whole ſyſtem of government, recurring to the *ancient pure principles* of the conſtitution." This is nothing leſs than overthrowing our government, and eſtabliſhing the revolutionary ſyſtem of France. Although every man muſt admire the honeſty of Mr. Fox in diſcovering his true ſentiments, every friend to this country muſt abhor principles that are manifeſtly ſubverſive of our moſt excellent conſtitution, which is the ſecurity of every thing dear to the community.

My Lord, theſe avowed ſentiments, ſo incompatible with our intereſt and ſecurity, are the fineſt panegyric upon the abilities and character of Mr. PITT, who oppoſes himſelf to ſuch a revolutionary ſtateſman. Mr. REEVES was charged by the Houſe of Commons with criminality againſt the conſtitution for ſlightly obſerving, figuratively, that " the tree *might* be ſhorn of its branches;"

branches;" while Mr. Fox, as a leading member of that Houſe, boldly maintains "the neceſſity of laying the axe to the root of the tree!!!" The "*ancient purity*" of a ſyſtem is a falſe idea of government, which has led many people of this country into the greateſt error. The utility of every conſtitution of government muſt ariſe, not from the ſimplicity of former days, but from the wiſdom and virtue of our own times. There was more truth than delicacy in the *Magna Charta magna f—ta* of Cromwell. All conſtitutions, and charters, and laws, are varied in their conſtructions, either by imperious neceſſity or concurring circumſtances.

My Lord, writing under the influence of truth alone, and animated, like an Engliſhman, in the cauſe of ſacred truth, by the love of juſtice and ſound policy, "giving unto Cæſar the things that are Cæſar's," and doing homage to the wiſdom and ſpirit of his Majeſty's Miniſters, who have carried us through a ſtorm with great ability and judgment, and who have proved

proved themſelves to be the beſt qualified, as well as the beſt diſpoſed, to put an honourable end to a moſt violent ſtruggle between powerful nations, I ought, in juſtice to my own candour and impartiality, to declare, that I am not *the hired Swiſs of party*.

Totally unconnected and unknown, without any intereſt to promote or ambition to gratify (unleſs it be a noble ambition, to do juſtice to the vaſt care and diſtinguiſhed merit of our rulers), I feel no partiality for any ſtateſman but Mr. PITT; and that enthuſiaſm does not ariſe ſo much from the high character of his noble anceſtor, or his own hereditary public virtue, as from the admiration of his wonderful talents, and a conviction that his heart is as ſound as his head is clear. He is, indeed, an illuſtrious character, in the contemplation of whoſe very ſuperior abilities and uncommon animation we ceaſe to admire the brilliant reputation of the great Chatham. Under the direction of this great man, we may reaſonably ex-

pect, in due time, to be emancipated from the preſſing difficulties of our ſituation, ariſing, in a great meaſure, from the ſeceſſion of our friends, and rapidly become happy, great, and flouriſhing.

My Lord, whatever may be ſaid of the celebrated Lord Shelburne (now Lanſdown), whatever his admirers may ſay of the great information and Machiavellian policy of the noble Marquis, the duplicity of his jeſuitical principles is not congenial to the character of this country, nor, by conſequence, calculated for its government, which requires an upright and conſiſtent miniſter. The nation has not Mr. Pitt's equal to fill his place. The public are ſo well convinced of this truth, that their confidence is as great in his talents and patriotiſm, as it was in the high character of his illuſtrious anceſtor, the thunder of whoſe eloquence happily preſerved the bleſſings of our conſtitution by a wiſe diſcrimination at home, and the intereſt of our vaſt navigation and commerce, by the energy and dignity of the

the nation abroad. God forbid Mr. Fox ſhould diſplace him! He is, indeed, a great orator, but not a great miniſter. The concluſion and tendency of his recent eloquence are the fineſt illuſtration of this truth. Innovations are at all times hazardous experiments, but at preſent they would be as bad as the peſtilence. He could not have given a ſtronger proof of his incapacity to diſplace Mr. Pitt, whom I muſt conſider as a conſtitutional miniſter, while Mr. Fox, by his own teſtimony, is a revolutionary miniſter, from which "*good Lord deliver us!*"

My Lord, reforms, if ever neceſſary, muſt be gradual, and not ſudden and radical. "To lay the axe to the root of the "tree" would be the act of a madman. Such a deſperate remedy is not neceſſary to the diſorder complained of by men who are in oppoſition to all meaſures of Government, however neceſſary they may be to the great purpoſes of the ſtate. The diſorder of which they complain exiſts chiefly in the diſtempered imagination of

party. Such of it as really exiſts and merits a ſerious attention, is, thank God! conſtitutional; that is, it is congenial to a free country, and ariſes more from the vaſt extent and aſtoniſhing proſperity of commerce and the influx of wealth than from dereliction.

Reform (which requires the tranquillity of peace) is a many-headed monſter; I therefore dread the effects of innovation. I am as ready as any man to admit that ſome conceſſion is due to public opinion; but then it ſhould be the real ſenſe of the nation, and not the capricious voice of the thoughtleſs and reſtleſs multitude, which is not the *vox populi*, but the *echo* of party. Diſorders, or rather popular diſcontents, have exiſted at all times and in all ſtates, even under the wiſeſt and beſt governments, and their remedies are to be found in the wiſdom of national councils and the virtue and public ſpirit of executive government, and not in the raſh experiments of political empirics. As the body politic is like the body natural, ſo the

the diſorders of the one ſhould be treated *ſkilfully*, with as much care and judgment as the other. Gradual renovations, adapted to the circumſtances and ſpirit of the times, will realize the bleſſings of liberty; but the deſperate remedy of Mr. Fox would totally overthrow the conſtitution, and with it the ſecurity of liberty and property, which are the great objects of ſociety and the invaluable bleſſings of a free ſtate. The charming eloquence of the Right Hon. Gentleman, and its concluſion, may be aptly compared to the caprice of an able architect, who has the happy talent to raiſe a beautiful ſtructure, and the folly to ſap the foundation.

My Lord, thoſe who maintain that a change of government is neceſſary *to the means of procuring an honourable and permanent peace*, are manifeſtly either the weakeſt men or the greateſt enemies to their country. If this change is meant upon the broad principle of Mr. Fox, God forbid ſuch an event! If it is only meant as a partial change of Miniſters,

that

that I admit conditionally. Such a *natural* coalition as ſhall ſtrengthen the preſent Adminiſtration by the acceſſion of ſome of the firſt characters in the kingdom for abilities, principles, and *conſiſtency*, may be deſirable, to give additional energy to his Majeſty's councils at this intereſting period. But the nation muſt not part with Mr. Pitt upon any terms. We had better endure even the reality of the diſorders complained of, by the party in oppoſition to Government, with Mr. Pitt, than let looſe the reforming principles of Mr. Fox without him. The talents of Mr. Fox are wonderful as an orator, but, in my apprehenſion, they are dangerous as a prime miniſter. To check the impetuoſity and contagion of his reforming ſyſtem, which would unhinge the wiſeſt government and endanger the vaſt bleſſings of domeſtic peace, confidence, and proſperity (ſo neceſſary to the ſecurity and dignity of our country), Mr. Pitt is as neceſſary to the conſtitution of the body politic as the ſoul is neceſſary to the body natural.

The conſtitution of a free ſtate or government, founded upon the equal rights of the community at large, to the ſecurity of liberty and property, is that which is beſt adapted to the exiſting circumſtances, and not that which is moſt conformable to the remote times of our anceſtors, who could not foreſee, and conſequently could not provide for the difference of ages.

My Lord, if there was no other reaſon, this diſcovery of the reforming ſpirit of Mr. Fox's party, congenial to the revolutionary principles of France, is alone the ſtrongeſt proof of the neceſſity of guarding as we would againſt the peſtilence, againſt a change of Miniſters to introduce a dangerous innovation, that, like contagion, would infect the minds of the people, render them reſtleſs, and endanger the conſtitution and the public tranquillity. To prevent ſo great a confuſion and national calamity as the reign of anarchy, confuſion, and terror, it is the intereſt, and muſt be the wiſh and endeavour of the beſt and greateſt part of the

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nation to ſupport Mr. Pitt's Adminiſtration, of which they have had ſo much experience, and with which, I have briefly ſhown, they have every reaſon to be perfectly ſatisfied.

I reſpectfully appeal to your Lordſhip, who has taken ſo active and diſtinguiſhed a part, for the fidelity of my Haſty Sketch of Mr. Pitt's celebrated Adminiſtration. Happy ſhall I be, my Lord, as an Engliſhman, warmly attached to the executive government of my country, and zealous for every branch of his Majeſty's ſervice, if I have, in the opinion of ſo great a judge (an opinion that is highly and juſtly reſpected by an enlightened, candid, and liberal nation), ſhown by this publication, not only the wiſdom of our domeſtic ſyſtem, under the preſent active Adminiſtration, by the happy effects of their meaſures, but the true principles and ſound policy of the war; and alſo the ability of his Majeſty's Miniſters to conduct it, under every difficulty, to an honourable iſſue; and to make the beſt peace that any ſet of

Miniſters

Miniſters can poſſibly make, under the exiſting circumſtances, for the intereſt, the dignity, and ſecurity of his Majeſty's dominions, and for the general ſatisfaction and tranquillity of Europe.

My Lord, I have the honour and the ambition to be, with the higheſt conſideration,

Your Lordſhip's

Moſt humble,

And moſt obedient Servant,

JOSEPH CAWTHORNE.

GREENWICH PARK.
Written in the year 1797.

APPENDIX.

WRITTEN IN 1800.

WHEN I conſider the diſtinguiſhed character of the well-informed and highly-reſpected Nobleman, to whom I have the honour to addreſs theſe ſhort obſervations on Mr. Pitt's Adminiſtration; his Lordſhip's acknowledged merit as a diplomatic character; his general talents and ſteady principles as a ſtateſman, with the beſt information, infinite application, and the moſt mature reflection; poſſeſſing, upon all occaſions, the warmeſt heart and the nobleſt animation for the proſperity and dignity of his Majeſty's dominions; I fear I may have given offence by ſaying ſo little upon a ſubject, that requires the beſt information and firſt-rate abilities to do it juſtice. My apology is, that I write conciſely and not circumſtantially, leaving the chain of events of the laſt thirty years, and

their various cauſes, to the faithful hiſtorian, who, by comparing the adminiſtration of Lord North and the American war with the adminiſtration of Mr. Pitt and the French war, will do juſtice to the ſplendid talents and public ſpirit of the laſt Miniſter, by ſhowing the proud ſtate of our commerce, revenue, and public credit (notwithſtanding the vaſt expenſes of the war), and the unexampled tranquillity and happineſs of the nation, under ſuch preſſing circumſtances, ariſing from the unbounded confidence of the landed, the commercial, and the monied intereſts of the kingdom in his Majeſty's able and patriotic Miniſters: a confidence that has tranquillized the country, given vaſt energy to executive Government, and which is manifeſtly the beſt means of rendering the nation formidable and invulnerable.

My Lord, my pamphlet is ſhort, becauſe it is only intended to take a tranſient view of the principles and conduct of the celebrated Adminiſtration of Mr. Pitt; but I hope I may with modeſty think it is well timed,

timed, and not unintereſting to the true friends of our country. It accounts for the length of the preſent Adminiſtration, which the public will find was abſolutely neceſſary to correct great abuſes, to repair great loſſes, and to promote the ſecurity and proſperity of this vaſt trading ſtate. It ſhows the ſuperiority of his Majeſty's preſent ſet of Miniſters, the eminent ſervices they have rendered to the commercial and political intereſts of the nation, and the great ſecurity of liberty and property under their Adminiſtration, which are the principal objects of a free ſtate.

My Lord, I preſume to think, and I hope my preſumption will not give offence, that it alſo ſhows, at a moſt intereſting period, the true principles upon which the war with France was undertaken, the abſolute neceſſity from which it has been proſecuted, and the abilities and ſincere diſpoſition of his Majeſty's ſervants to bring it to an honourable iſſue, *as ſoon as the ſituation of Europe, and the views of the belligerent powers, will admit* of ſo great,

ſo happy, and, by conſequence, ſo deſirable an event.

But as great intereſts are concerned, and extraordinary effects muſt ariſe from the conduct of Great Britain, it is an arduous taſk to tranquillize Europe; a taſk that teaches the folly, the raſhneſs, and danger of PRECIPITATION; and, as a neceſſary conſequence, the wiſdom of the matureſt conſideration, and the ſoundeſt judgment to render peace ſolid and permanent, by procuring, as much as poſſible, ſuch *a balance of power* in Europe, as ſhall check the ambition and injuſtice of the ſtrongeſt, and ſerve as a barrier to the weaker ſtates; which, without ſuch a ſecurity from the generous and ſpirited conduct of Great Britain, will be conſtantly alarmed, and upon the brink of a precipice.

My Lord, although France is the greateſt continental power of Europe, Auſtria and Ruſſia not excepted, Great Britain is the chief ſecurity to the European ſtates, by maintaining principles of moderation and

ſubſtantial

ſubſtantial juſtice, contraſted to the overwhelming ambition of France. At no period was this truly great and glorious conduct of the Britiſh Government more neceſſary than at preſent; nor (fortunately for this country, and indeed for Europe) never were Britiſh Miniſters, at even the proudeſt period of our hiſtory, better qualified with talents and principles than the preſent, to promote this ſecurity to his Majeſty's dominions in particular, and to the general intereſts of Europe, againſt the revolutionary principles and towering ambition of the French nation.

But much and ſincerely as I have admired the ſound principles and conſiſtency of Mr. Pitt's Adminiſtration, and particularly their decided and animated conduct throughout the war; and much as I am diſpoſed to do homage to the very great merit of his Majeſty's ſervants, I wiſh to be conſidered as writing with the impartiality of an honeſt man, under no other influence than that of truth. In this character I will hazard an opinion upon the rumours

rumours of peace, to ſhow that the taſk of reconciling ſo many jarring intereſts, and ſatisfying the great belligerent powers, requires Herculean labours; and therefore, if the Britiſh Miniſtry are to act with all the circumſpection and ſound judgment which wiſdom requires, to bring about an honourable and ſolid peace, the great object is not ſo attainable as it is deſirable; and, by conſequence, it does not approach this country ſo rapidly, nor ſo auſpiciouſly, as ſanguine conſtitutions imagine. They expect peace juſt as they expect indemnification, without conſidering the ſituation and views of the contending powers, and that the latter muſt yield to the former. They do not conſider, that the caprice and fortune of war are often at variance with the virtue and wiſdom of the moſt enlightened governments; nor that the greateſt ſtateſmen and the wiſeſt nations muſt yield to imperious neceſſity.

For inſtance: the ſituation of France muſt neceſſarily check the views of England and Auſtria, and the ſituation of Great

Great Britain and her illuſtrious ally muſt yield to imperious circumſtances. By the neutrality of Pruſſia the preponderance is on the ſide of France, and, unleſs it is counterpoiſed by Ruſſia, the French government will ſpeak of a general peace in a high tone, and perhaps with little ſincerity; becauſe, whenever they are releaſed from a vaſt ſtruggle with the powerful Houſe of Auſtria, peace with England would not be deſirable to the French Government for many cogent reaſons. France will then be at liberty to attend to her ambitious deſigns againſt Portugal, in the preſervation of which kingdom Great Britain is highly intereſted: ſhe will be better able to diſturb Ireland, where this country is moſt vulnerable: ſhe will more vigorouſly purſue her deſigns in Egypt and in India. But her greateſt object and ſtruggle will be to increaſe her maritime ſtrength, to render France, with the aſſiſtance of Spain and Holland, truly formidable to Great Britain by ſea.

A pamphlet made its appearance ſome time ago, with the curious title, "PEACE IN OUR OWN POWER." I deſire leave to ſay a few words, to ſhow that, how near ſoever the great object may be to his Majeſty's heart, and however glorioufly the Britiſh Cabinet may ſtruggle for this great event, to tranquillize Europe, peace is abſolutely NOT in our own power at preſent. In the commanding ſituation of France, and by the ſeceſſion of our allies, peace between England and France muſt, if I am not greatly miſtaken, be upon the broad baſis of the *ſtatus ante bellum*, which requires a total ſurrender of our acquiſitions, leaving Great Britain no compenſation whatever for a vaſt expenſe of blood and treaſure, and a great accumulation of debt and taxes.

My Lord, it is manifeſt, even to an ordinary capacity, that France, in her preſent ſituation, cannot negotiate a peace with England upon any terms ſhort of reſtitution of all that the Engliſh have acquired during the war, upon Mr. Pitt's own principle.

ciple *. The French government will undoubtedly inſiſt upon the return of every territorial acquiſition, and alſo of the French ſhips taken at Toulon, and thoſe taken from the Dutch in the name of the Stadtholder. They will undoubtedly make the intereſts of the French and Dutch nations one cauſe.

Thoſe ſanguine politicians, and many there are of that deſcription, who look for an indemnification, may think this ground of reconciliation hard; yet hard as the condition may appear to them as *the baſis of a peace*, after ſo great a ſacrifice of the blood and treaſure of this nation, I apprehend it would not quite ſatisfy the preſent government of France, which will probably require alſo the reſtitution of the conqueſt of *Seringapatam*, to reinſtate the family of the late Tippoo Saib, their Oriental ally. The intereſts of Europe, Aſia, and America, are rendered inſeparable by their being ſo intimately connected. It cannot, therefore, be

* The Right Honourable Gentleman has enlarged upon "the injuſtice of a nation finally annexing a territory acquired during war."

ſuppoſed, without a poor compliment to the penetration of the French government, that they will be inattentive to our vaſt aſcendancy in Aſia, and our intereſt in America, when they are negotiating a peace with this country to give reſt to Europe.

If, therefore, the French nation requires, as the baſis of a negotiation for peace with England, the *ſtatus ante bellum*, it will manifeſtly appear to the Britiſh nation, that peace, upon this broad ground, is not in our own power at preſent; ſince the terms would be too humiliating to Great Britain, and too gratifying to the ambition of France to be complied with, unleſs our *relative* is admitted as fully as our actual ſituation before the war.

Peace is certainly deſirable, at almoſt any price not below our condition * before the war, to a great manufacturing and trading ſtate, ſtaggering, like a drunken man, under a heavy load of incumbrances; but, al-

* I mean the poſitive and *relative* ſituation of this country.

though

though it is the greateſt of all bleſſings to a vaſt commercial nation, it is, in my apprehenſion, ſo remote at preſent, notwithſtanding the force of conjecture, as to have no better exiſtence than " the baſeleſs fabric of a viſion." To illuſtrate this opinion, I muſt briefly obſerve, that although the *ſtatus ante bellum* may be the condition required on the part of England, it cannot be expected on that of France, ſince her commanding ſituation upon the Continent requires an indemnification, how juſtly I will not ſay for obvious reaſons. In commanding ſituations the juſtice is not conſidered ſo much as the neceſſity of the thing. If then the *ſtatus ante bellum* is not reciprocal (which indeed it can never be), the difficulty of negotiation ſeems, at leaſt for the preſent, to be inſurmountable.

My Lord, it is not natural nor at all neceſſary, in my apprehenſion, to include a great *maritime* power in a peace between continental ſtates, becauſe their intereſts are as different as the poles are oppoſite; but it is abſolutely neceſſary to prevent a ſepa-

rate

rate peace, *coûte que coûte*, that ſhall leave France at liberty to employ all her vaſt force and great influence againſt the dominions of Great Britain in Europe, Aſia, and America.

My Lord, Europe muſt be quite at reſt from the boundleſs ambition of France by a ſolid general peace, of which, I believe, there is not at preſent even the ſhadow of probability, from the claſhing intereſts and views of the Engliſh and French governments. Conjecture may be buſy, and the funds may fluctuate, but it is manifeſt that "peace is NOT in our own power" at preſent. I am confident, however, and ſo is the nation, that the beſt endeavours have been uſed with becoming dignity, and will continue to be uſed on the part of his Majeſty's Miniſters, to check the impetuoſity of the French, to put bounds to their vaſt ambition, and to bring about ſuch a peace as ſhall be reciprocally ſatisfactory and permanent. Such muſt be the great object of Mr. Pitt's Adminiſtration; an object of vaſt magnitude and infinite conſequence, which

which muſt, if I am not miſtaken in their deſerved popular character, employ their whole attention; becauſe ſuch a peace only can be deſirable, to ſecure the vaſt intereſts of Great Britain and the tranquillity of Europe.

With this conviction upon my mind, which I believe is the clear conviction of every diſpaſſionate man, I implore the bleſſings of Heaven upon his Majeſty's councils, and the Divine protection upon his arms, and wait with becoming reſpect for the termination of a ſtruggle, in which every thing is at ſtake, and which I hope will end in a manner honourable to Mr. Pitt's Adminiſtration, by firmly eſtabliſhing conditions that are perfectly conſiſtent with the dignity, the ſecurity, and proſperity of his Majeſty's dominions in Europe, Aſia, and America. In the mean time, I hope I may with modeſty, and without the leaſt deſign of giving offence to men in authority, ſay one word on the meaning of the *ſtatus ante bellum*, as it applies to this country.

The *ſtatus ante bellum*, or the ſituation exactly in which this nation ſtood before the preſent war with France, ſhould be rightly underſtood. It is conſidered by ſome men of ſanguine diſpoſitions, whom nothing will ſatisfy but indemnification, as humiliating, after ſo vaſt a ſacrifice of blood and treaſure; but I am not of that opinion. I am ſo much of a different way of thinking, that I ſhall moſt humbly thank God if my country has the good fortune to make peace upon ſo ſolid a foundation, after ſo great and ſo precarious a ſtruggle. How happy would the convulſed ſtates of Italy and Germany be, could they have the ſame good fortune and ſecurity as the *ſtatus ante bellum* for their tranquillity!

My Lord, a nation that goes to war, and has the worſt of it by the preponderance of the other ſide, is, in my apprehenſion, fortunate, if ſhe is able to ſecure her former ſituation, or the condition ſhe was in before the war. It muſt, I think, be truly honourable to Mr. Pitt's Adminiſtration, and highly ſatisfactory to an enlightened nation

after

(after a vaſt ſtruggle to guard againſt ſo great a contagion as revolutionary principles, tending to overthrow the beſt government, and with it the ſecurity of liberty and property, which embrace every thing dear to a free people, and ſuch vaſt exertions to tranquillize Europe), if ſhe is no worſe at the end of ſuch a precarious ſtruggle than at the beginning, by holding exactly the ſame ſituation and rank, notwithſtanding a conſiderable preponderance on the ſide of the enemy, not from ſuperior virtue or wiſdom, but by the fortune of war.

Should it be ſaid, that territorial acquiſitions made by this country (no matter when or how) ſhould indemnify Great Britain for a great expenſe of blood and treaſure, or at leaſt in part, I have the courage to deny it: firſt, becauſe the principle of "annexing territory acquired during war" has been wiſely and warmly exploded by Mr. Pitt; and next, becauſe it would be inconſiſtent with the juſtice and honour of this nation to require the Dutch, who had no direct quarrel with us, to pay the ex-

penſe of our war with the French by the ſacrifice of their colonies, and their annexation to his Majeſty's dominions.

It will undoubtedly be ſaid, that if, by the *ſtatus ante bellum*, we return to our *poſitive* ſituation before the war, how can we be in our *relative* ſituation, unleſs the Stadtholder is reſtored to the Dutch, and Belgium to the Emperor? This I admit; and therefore I contend, that the *ſtatus ante bellum* means both our actual and our relative ſituation before the war; the latter of which is of infinite conſequence to the commercial and political intereſts of this country.

As every idea of indemnification is abſorbed by the fortune of war, I think Great Britain can have no objection to reſtore the tranquillity of Europe by a general peace, founded upon the broad principle of the *ſtatus ante bellum*, which will require the reſtitution of all our acquiſitions, provided the relative ſituation of this country be the ſame as before the war, by the re-eſtabliſhment of the Stadtholder and the reſtoration

of

of Belgium, without which Great Britain would not be *in ſtatu quo*.

My Lord, in no other manner can the *ſtatus ante bellum* be underſtood, than the ſituation poſitive and relative in which this nation ſtood before the war. Without this conſent, on the part of France, to reſtore the order of things, for the balance of power, as far as it concerns Great Britain, it is manifeſt his Majeſty's Miniſters cannot ſurrender their valuable territorial acquiſitions; which are held, not for the purpoſe of annexation, but as a ſecurity for the reſtoration by France of the order of things as they ſtood before the war, commonly called the *ſtatus ante bellum*, which would be the beſt indemnification the Britiſh nation can receive for a vaſt expenſe of blood and treaſure.

My Lord, the fine-ſpun reaſoning of ſpeculative politicians is often more deluſive than convincing; truth and juſtice, and ſound policy, lie in a narrow compaſs. The buſineſs of peace, though of the greateſt

conſequence, is well underſtood, and only requires a ſincere diſpoſition to reſtore the balance of power for the ſecurity and tranquillity of Europe, which is convulſed by reſtleſs ambition, of which the French, as a great and powerful nation, have undoubtedly their ſhare. If the relative ſituation of Great Britain is included in the *ſtatus ante bellum*, his Majeſty's Miniſters will make an honourable, and indeed a glorious peace; ſince the effectual reſiſtance, the total excluſion, and happy emancipation of this country from the worſt of all contagions, namely, the vaſt calamity attending revolutionary principles, which ſap the foundation of government and of ſociety, and deſtroy the ſecurity of every thing dear to the community, is of itſelf worth all the expenſe of this nation, great as it has been, and all the care and anxiety of Adminiſtration, for which they deſerve the higheſt commendation and the warmeſt gratitude of their country.

The *ſtatus ante bellum* ſeems to be the beſt ground for a general peace, as being

the beſt means of reſtoring the order of things before the war, called the Balance of Power. Negotiation muſt be deluſive, and peace viſionary, without a ſincere conſent, on the part of the French government, that Great Britain ſhall hold her relative, as well as her actual ſituation before the war; ſince, without the reſtoration of Holland and Belgium to their former condition, peace with France cannot be honourable, nor even ſafe to this country, in the humble opinion of the writer of theſe few pages. At the ſame time, it muſt be confeſſed by the candid and liberal ſtateſman, who is really deſirous of putting an end to the great calamity of war, that, in the commanding ſituation of the French nation, ſhe has a right to an indemnification, either by an increaſe of territory, or an equivalent; but how her dominion is to be increaſed, or what equivalent will be ſatisfactory, are weighty conſiderations, for which the belligerent powers alone are competent, and which are, therefore, moſt reſpectfully left to the great experience and diſtinguiſhed talents of his Majeſty's Mi-

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niſters, with an humble tribute of admiration and commendation for their tried patriotiſm, and their ſubſtantial and general juſtice, to promote and ſecure the true intereſts and tranquillity of Europe, Aſia, and America.

THE END.

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